

Hawthorn Rowing Club Water Safety Policy

Hawthorn Rowing Club (HRC) is committed to ensuring, promoting and improving the safety of all its members, visitors and to members of the general public.

This policy applies to all members of Hawthorn Rowing Club when using or representing the club facility and HRC equipment. This policy also applies to all other visitors to the premises who use the facilities of Hawthorn Rowing Club, and users of privately owned rowing equipment.

If you have any questions regarding the safety policy, please contact the HRC Safety Officer.

Responsibility

Responsibilities for the safety conduct of Club's activities lies with the individual members. The club has its own Safety Policy which is referred to and details of how to access provided on all membership application forms. The member's signature on the application form acknowledges the reading of the Safety Policy and acceptance of its contents. (N.B. The signature of a parent / guardian is required for all members under the age of 18.)

All HRC members are required to be familiar and comply with, when conducting club business or activities, in training or in racing:

1. Rowing Victoria (RV) Safety Code
2. RV Rules of Racing
3. HRC Water Safety Policy
4. HRC Boat Usage Policy

Every member has a responsibility to notify the Safety Officer and the Club Captain or Vice Captain of any breach of this safety procedure immediately.

Members found to be in breach of this policy, as described below, may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the HRC Constitution.

Policy

General

1. All members must abide by the rules and regulations of HRC.
2. Be vigilant around the club – be aware the clubhouse is in a somewhat remote location. All members are advised not to train on their own. Juniors should always be collected from the club, or with parental permission to catch public transport, be accompanied to the tram stop by a coach.
3. All members must behave sensibly whilst on or around the water.
4. The club maintains adequate comprehensive insurance to cover personal injury on and off the water and personal injury and damage to property or third parties. All members of RV are also insured through that organisation.

Boat Incident / Damage

5. In the event of an incident or near miss occurring the Rowing Victoria Incident Report Form must be completed by the crew and submitted to HRC who will also forward to RV.
6. In the event of any damage to HRC boats or other equipment being discovered, the Captain / Vice Captain or any other member of Committee must be notified, and an HRC Boat Incident & Maintenance Request Form must be completed. If damage is such that you feel the boat is unsafe it is to be tagged as such with red Do Not Use labels found hanging on the booking boards.
7. Any boat or oars marked as under repair are not to be used under any circumstances as repair are made for the safety of all who use the fleet.
8. Each person of the crew must bring any equipment failure or safety issues to the attention of the coxswain or steer-person immediately.

Swimming Ability

9. All rowers and beginners must be in good health and able to swim a minimum of 50 metres in light clothing.
10. Any member of the Committee or coach will have the authority to prevent anyone from going afloat whom they believe cannot swim.

Boat Usage

11. Members may only use equipment which they are experienced enough to use as decreed by the HRC Boat Usage Policy, and where applicable approval has been granted by the Captain.
12. It is strongly advised that single scullers train on the water with other crews, or be under supervision. Single sculling at times when not under supervision and no other club crews are on water is discouraged, but if members choose to do so, they do so at their own risk.
13. All rowers and coxswains must wear sensible fitness training clothes, with sufficient layers, especially in cold weather. It is strongly advised that rowers wear suitable sunscreen, hats and carry water bottles with them when training.
14. Coxed boats must carry a coxswain.
15. All rowers in a boat must listen and adhere to instructions given by the coxswain or steer-person.

16. All new members must be taught how to lift and handle the club's boats safely.
17. Rowers and coxswains must be taught how to launch and land a boat safely as well as the necessary commands and corresponding actions.
18. All new members must be taught how to get in and out of a boat correctly and are shown how to use the oar before going onto the water.
19. All coxswains are required to become accredited via the Good Coxswain Course by Wednesday 1st October 2008.
20. Boats must be regularly cleaned both inside and out including the slides and seats.
21. The jetty must also be scrubbed, swept or cleaned in a manner to reduce slipperiness.
22. Before and after every outing:
 - a. Sign outing out in log sheet found at bottom of stairs, sign outing back in on log sheet.
 - b. Check equipment for leaks; check buoyancy compartments, seals and ventilation bungs.
 - c. Ensure any equipment to be used are not tagged with red "Do Not Use" tags, or marked in any other way indicating in need of, or under repair.
 - d. Check all nuts securing the riggers are tight, check the gates are not loose, and the nut on top of the gate is tight. Check the seat wheels function smoothly and allow the seat to travel the full length of the slide. Check the stretchers for security. Check that heel release mechanisms are effective. Check the slides are aligned and that any wing nuts securing the slides are tight. Check rudder-lines, steering mechanism, rudder and fin. Check the boat has a firmly attached bow ball (white rubber ball of at least 4cm diameter).

Coxless Boats

23. Coxless boats are primarily for the use of experienced crews. Where permission has been granted for the use of a coxless boat as per the HRC Boat Usage Policy, it must be under the supervision of a coach and not in darkness or adverse conditions.
24. Coxless boats may only be used unsupervised when steered by a competent steersperson and/or at the discretion of the Captain or Vice Captain.
25. The Club Secretary, Captain and Vice Captain keep a list of authorised steerspersons. It is also displayed on the noticeboard. If you wish to be added to the list, please see the Captain or Vice Captain.
26. All coxless boats must be steered from the bow when in use on rivers with the exception of racing or training on straight line/lane courses or when agreed by the Captain and/or Vice Captain.

Light and Visibility

27. All boats must be clearly visible at all times and well lit in accordance with Marine Safety Victoria Guidelines. It is the responsibility of the crew (including the coxswain) to provide appropriate lighting between dusk and dawn and at other times of poor light / visibility. Lights must be positioned centrally, and not on the side/riggers. If the lights are not available then the crew must not boat. In the event of a light failing, the boat must return immediately to the club at light pressure/slow speed, staying close to the bank and exercising extreme caution.
28. Novices may only row in darkness in coxed boats, steered by a competent coxswain.

Waterway Navigation

29. Navigation of the Yarra River shall be as described by the Yarra River Rules published on the [Rowing Victoria Website](#).
30. The Parks Victoria Ranger and the Victoria Water Police are well within their rights to issue infringement notices to people who ignore marine law. The law applies to rowers and coaching boats. Rowing Victoria Traffic Marshals also operate along the river monitoring traffic flow and safety regulations.
31. Always boat off and return to the landing stage in an upstream direction
32. Always look out regularly for other river users and water craft. They may NOT know normal navigation rules.
33. Learn and be familiar with international conventions of PORT and STARBOARD.
34. Under no circumstances should the landing stage be approached via the Club side of the bank when coming downstream.
35. Under no circumstances are you to proceed further than the bend at Collins Bridge (the end of the Brewery Straight Melways Ref: Map 2D A10). Beyond this point there is unacceptable risk to your safety due to narrow width of the river (diminishing boat turning circles) and degree of debris and snags.
36. Always keep to the bank closest to your bowside – in narrow sections of the Yarra and as your crew approaches bends in the river always be particularly alert to any crews that may be coming from the opposite direction.
37. Only turn your boat when visibility is good in both directions.
38. Do not stop your boat where it is obscured from view by other boats, and ensure when you do stop your boat that you are as close to the bank as safety permits.
39. At bridges, the crews travelling downstream have right of way.

40. Do not panic if a crew is coming toward you but call out in a clear voice, identifying the crew as best you can (eg, by type of boat and club if possible). Call out to boats that seem to be unaware of your presence and getting too close : 'LOOK AHEAD!'
41. Attached to this document is a diagram showing turning and permitted stopping zones along the Yarra River downstream of Herring Island for those who may venture towards the city. It also shows which arch to use depending on which whether you rowing upstream or downstream. This downstream section of the river can get very congested at peak training times.
42. HRC members will abide by relevant waterway rules when using alternative venues for training and or / or racing.

Rowing in adverse conditions

43. When the river is flowing so high you can't see the jetty or so low that there is more than a foot below the jetty to put the boat in the water, the club boats are not to go out on the water without prior approval of the captain. This is not only in the interest of our club in protecting the boat fleet from potential damage, but in protecting you the member from accidental injury. Particularly following a downpour when the river levels usually rise there is a lot of additional debris and logs floating in the water, and with a faster than normal flow this can cause quite severe damage to boats.
44. Be aware of tidal conditions, most notably if the tide is going out, as this may impact upon the water level in relation to the jetty when you return from your row. If the water level is below the jetty and the tide is still going out, boats are not to go on the water.
45. Do not go out in rough weather, when the river is flooded, or when the current is flowing fast (most commonly post heavy rain). If you are in doubt ask a qualified coach or the Safety Officer. If in doubt, don't go out.
46. The Safety Officer, qualified coaches and committee members have the authority to suspend rowing activities if they think the conditions are too dangerous. A notice will be placed on the booking board when this occurs.

Boat Trailer

47. The trailer must conform to current road safety standards.
48. All new members must be taught how to tie boats onto the trailer safely.

Emergency / First Aid

49. If there is an emergency phone 000 as soon as possible.
50. First Aid equipment can be found upstairs above the bar in the first aid marked box. Life jackets for use of the launch are in the motor boats. Displays on water safety, life saving and resuscitation procedures can be found upstairs on the noticeboard. A Plan of the local waterway pointing out local hazards and rules is viewable at the jetty.
51. If there is demand the safety officer will organise First Aid courses for members of the club.

Privately owned boats

52. This policy applies to HRC members with privately owned boats whether they are stored in the boathouse or not. In the event an HRC member breaches this policy when using a privately owned boat, the owners are reminded that they may invalidate their own and the club's insurance if they do go out with a boat that does not comply with these safety rules.

Junior Participants (Under 18's)

53. Juniors must be supervised by a responsible adult at all times.
54. Junior rowers will be encouraged to wear a PFD at all times during on-water training. However, subject to the parent's consent, junior rowers may be permitted to train on-water without wearing a PFD. Parents are responsible for obtaining a PFD for their child.
55. Parents are responsible for ensuring supervision and care for their children at regattas and training camps.
56. Coaches will ensure junior rowers are not allowed to row unless all paperwork is properly completed by the child's parent/guardian and returned.

Land training

57. Land training should be properly supervised. All members should be made aware of the benefits of warming up and warming down to avoid injuries.
58. Use of weights, and weight lifting should only be undertaken after instruction in the use of correct techniques.

Use of launch / motor boat

59. All users of the motorboats must possess a Victorian Motor Boat Licence.
60. Motorboats are to be used purely for coaching purposes only.
61. Driver and passengers need to wear lifejackets at all times when afloat.
62. Make sure the launch has the minimum safety equipment requirements as decreed by Marine Safety Victoria. A diagram of minimum requirements is attached to this document.

Breach of safety policy

If a crew/sculler is found to be in breach of this policy, the following action shall be taken:

- The entire crew will be told they are in breach of the Safety Procedure.
- The crew may also be issued with a written warning outlining their breach of the procedure and stating that a further offence may lead to the suspension of the crew boating from HRC and from racing (at the committees discretion).
- Repeated breaches of the water safety procedure may lead to further disciplinary action at the committee's discretion in accordance with the Club Constitution.
- All members of Hawthorn Rowing Club and visitors to the Club using the Club's facilities are bound by this policy.

Related Forms / Documents

RV Incident Report Form

HRC Boat Incident & Maintenance Request Form

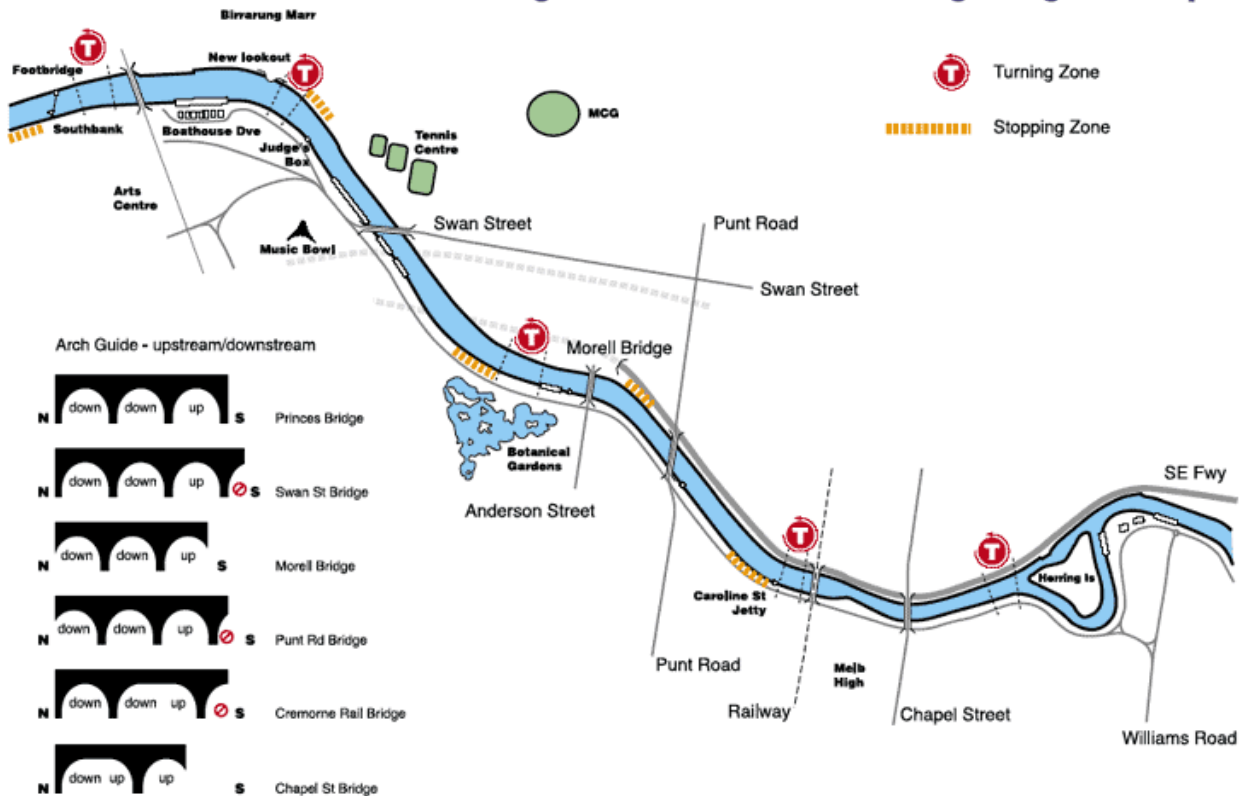
HRC Boat Usage Policy

RV Capsize manual

RV Rowsafe document

RV Rules of Racing

Rowing Victoria Yarra River Rowing Navigation Map



Minimum safety equipment requirements for mechanically powered vessels

	Powerboat			
	COASTAL OFFSHORE (>2 nm from coast)	COASTAL INSHORE (<2 nm from coast)	ENCLOSED (Bays and estuaries)	INLAND (Rivers, lakes and dams)
PFD (per person on board/towed)	Type 1	Type 1	Type 1	Type 1, 2 or 3
Approved fire extinguisher (where any fuel is carried. Refer to relevant table to determine number and capacity required)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Waterproof buoyant torch	1	1	1	1
Anchor and chain or line or both	1	1	1	
Bailer (if no electric or manual bilge pumping system)	1	1	1	1
Bucket with lanyard (can also double as a bailer)	1	1	1	1
Electric or manual bilge pumping system (if vessel has covered bilge or closed underfloor compartments)	1	1	1	1
Pair of oars with rowlocks or pair of paddles (if vessel is up to and including 4.8 m)	1	1	1	1
Hand held orange smoke signals	2	2	2	
Hand held red distress flares	2	2	2	
Lifebuoy (if vessel is more than 8 m but less than 12 m in length)	1	1	1	1
Lifebuoy (if vessel is more than 12 m in length)	2	2	2	2
One dinghy or liferaft (if vessel is more than 12 m in length)	1	1		
Compass	1			
Marine radio	1			
Red star parachute distress rocket	1			
Approved EPIRB	1			